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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/801,558	Applicant(s) NIITSUMA, TETSUYA
	Examiner CHAD DICKERSON	Art Unit 2625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 September 2008.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 17 March 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-166/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____

Continuation of Attachment(s) 3). Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08), Paper No(s)/Mail Date :see IDS attachments dated 5/16 and 9/18/2007.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments, see page12, filed 9/8/2008, with respect to the 112 2nd paragraph rejections have been fully considered and are persuasive. The 112 2nd paragraph rejection of claim 5 has been withdrawn.
2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The amendment to the claims has necessitated a new ground(s) of rejection. However, the references of Niituma '782 and Maeda '703 are still applied to the independent claims. In Applicant's remarks traversing the previous rejection, the Applicant asserted that the claim limitations concerning the "*external data output limitation setting means*" and the "*control means*" are not disclosed by the two references mentioned above. The Examiner would like to briefly address these contentions below.

Regarding the "*external data output limitation setting means*", the manager of the printer is used to setup the different printing profiles in terms of the limitation of each user in the printing device itself. Since the manager performs this feature of setting a limitation associated with image data to be printed that is transferred from an apparatus, which can comprise a computer such as the information processing apparatus in Applicant's claim or a printer, as a transfer source other than the currently used printer, the Examiner believes that the claim feature is met by the Maeda reference (see Maeda col. 13, ln 44-63).

Regarding the features of containing both a “second image data reception means” and “control means”, the first printing device in Niitsuma ‘782 can be considered as containing both elements since the Nitsuma invention involves sending image data at the server back at the device where the image data originated (see Niitsuma paragraphs [0050]-[0058]). Since this device can receive the image data and also check to see if image data transmitted over the network is for that copier device itself (see paragraphs [0050]-[0058] and [0099]).

Lastly, regarding the control means feature, the Niitsuma reference is used to determine whether an apparatus ID received from the network coincides with the digital copying device itself. This is disclosed in paragraph [0090] of the Niitsuma reference. The Apparatus ID is considered as the address of the device, which is checked. Also, the Niitsuma reference along with the Maeda reference both disclose printing image data at printing device when the transfer source of the image data is not the printing apparatus itself (see Niitsuma paragraphs [0049] and [0050] and Maeda col. 5, ln 53-67). However, the determination of whether the transfer source of the image data is the image printing device itself is clearly performed by the reference of Saito added to cure any deficiencies.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Niitsuma '782 (US Pub No 2001/0050782) in view of Maeda '703 (USP 6791703) and Saito (USP 6128101).

Re claim 1: Niitsuma '782 discloses an image printing system formed by connecting, through a network, a plurality of image printing apparatuses (i.e. as seen in figure 1, a **plurality of image printing apparatuses (1 and 2) are connected through a network (4)**. There may be a large number of image forming apparatuses compared to a large number of personal computers (3) that serve as image processing servers (3); see figs. 1 and 3; paragraphs [0047]-[0062]), each having image reading means for reading an image from an original to obtain image data (i.e. in the system, the **image forming apparatuses have an image reading means (13) for reading a document and converting it into image data; see fig. 2; paragraphs [0029]-[0031]**), image printing means for printing an image on a sheet on the basis of the image data (i.e. in the system, a **image forming means is used to form or print an image on a sheet that reflects the image data that is processed; see fig. 2; paragraphs [0029]-[0031], [0049] and [0055]**), and first image processing means for performing image processing for the image data (i.e. the **image forming apparatus contains an image processing means that is used to conduct the image processing on the image data read from the image reading means; see paragraphs [0028]-[0031]**), and an information processing apparatus having second image processing means for

performing image processing for the image data (i.e. the image processing apparatus, considered as the information processing apparatus, contains a image processing means that performs image processing on image data transferred from the image forming apparatus; see paragraphs [0028]-[0031]),

wherein said image printing apparatus further comprises apparatus ID storage means for storing an apparatus ID which specifies said image printing apparatus (i.e. the address of the image forming apparatus is considered as the apparatus ID. In each of the apparatuses, the address on the network is previously set, so that the image forming apparatus can be discriminated on the network from other apparatuses. In order for the image forming apparatus to memorize this address, the address has to be stored on the image forming device in order to send this to other devices on the network; see paragraph [0051], [0058]).

and first image data transmission means for transmitting, to said information processing apparatus, image data to be output, an apparatus ID stored in said apparatus ID storage means, and a transfer destination address which is an address of a remote image printing apparatus to which the image data is to be transferred (i.e. the network connecting means (11) is used to transmit information to the image processing apparatus that is used to perform image processing on the transferred image data. The transferred data includes the image data and the actual apparatus ID that represents the address of the transmitting apparatus. Also, in the system, the transmitting apparatus can send information from the image processing apparatus to a different image forming apparatus as stated in

paragraph [0050]. With this feature of Niitsuma '782, the destination address information has to be sent to the personal computer or server in order to know what different location to send the processed image data; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067].

 said information processing apparatus further comprises first image data reception means for receiving image data, an apparatus ID, and a transfer destination address from said first image data transmission means (i.e. in the system, when the image processing apparatus, considered as the information processing apparatus, is used to process information, the image data along with the address information of the transmitting apparatus is sent to the processing device. Also, when the original sending image forming device sends information to the personal computer to have a different destination device, it is understood that the destination address of the other device has to be included in the communication to the processing server device in order to ensure that the image data is delivered to the different device; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]), and

 second image data transmission means for transmitting the image data received by said first image data reception means and the apparatus ID to the transfer destination address received by said first image data reception means (i.e. in the system, when the image data is sent to the image processing apparatus for image processing, the image data can be sent to a different image forming apparatus that originally sent the image information to the image processing apparatus. Since the image data is sent to another image forming apparatus that is different

from the original apparatus, the feature of sending the information to the transfer destination address is performed. Shown in figures 4(a) and 4(b) is information that is transferred between the printer and computers in figure 3. Disclosed in paragraph [0099] is an example of another apparatus sending information over a network. A copier device on the network checks the packet to see if that packet is a packet of information for itself. This is an example of an apparatus sending an apparatus ID, or address information in a packet, to another receiving device that is transmitted by a device on the network; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

the least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises
image printing of image data which is transferred from an apparatus as a transfer source other than said image printing apparatus (i.e. the system allows for the image data that is processed to be sent to the same or another image forming apparatus besides the image forming apparatus that sent the image data information to be processed. The processed information can be printed after the image forming apparatuses receive the image data; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

second image data reception means for receiving image data and an apparatus ID from said second image data transmission means in said information processing apparatus (i.e. the first digital copying device that transmits information to the server contains the second image data reception means since it receives the image data from the server after image processing is performed on the server. Also, since the image data be contained within packet information and this packet

information can also have the destination of the image data, which can include the address of a copier considered as an apparatus ID, then the original digital copying device can receive both image data and packet information that contains information designating if the packet of information is for the digital copier itself; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067] and [0099]), and

control means for determining whether or not the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with an apparatus ID which specifies the self image printing apparatus stored in said apparatus ID storage means (i.e. in the system, a packet of information that is communicated over a network from a first apparatus can be checked by a second apparatus containing a CPU to determine if the packet or information belongs to the copier device itself. Since the packet information is in a form that contains the destination information in the actual packet, the system performs the feature of looking at an address in the transmitted packet and comparing this information with the copier's own address information. In order for the copier device to perform this feature, the copier has to contain a device that stores or is at least used to notify the system's CPU what the digital copier's address is on the network. As stated in paragraph [0051], an address of each digital copier is set. Once this address is set, it is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that this information has to be stored and readily available to the printer whenever it needs to include address information in transmitted data to the server in order to get the processed information returned; see paragraphs [0050]-[0058] and [0098]-[0110]) and

when said transfer source of said image data is not the self image printing apparatus, causing said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said second image data reception means (i.e. in the system, after a server processes image data received from copier (1), the server can transfer the process information to copier (2) in order for this information to be printed. The digital copier to can receive this information and can be considered as the copier that is not the transfer source, or the server can also fit the above limitation. Whenever the latter copier receives the print job, the job can be output based on the control command of outputting the image; see paragraphs [0048]-[0055] and [0099]-[0109]).

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach external data output-limitation setting means for setting a limitation associated with image printing of image data, and control means for determining whether or not the transfer source of said image data is the self image printing apparatus by confirming whether or not the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with an apparatus ID stored in said apparatus ID storage means, causing said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said second image data reception means on the basis of a limitation set by said external data output limitation setting means.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses external data output-limitation setting means for setting a limitation associated with image printing of image data (i.e. the system of Maeda is similar to the system of Nitsuma since they both involve transferring information between a server or

computer and printer for printing information (same field of endeavor). However, in the system of Maeda, the printer has profiles regarding the users that limit the use of the printing apparatus. The manager of the apparatus not only sets the limitations but can also set the users' passwords to the image forming apparatus; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52), and causing said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said second image data reception means on the basis of a limitation set by said external data output limitation setting means (i.e. in the system, when a user enters in ID information in order to use the apparatus, the image forming apparatus compares this ID information to the ID information stored in the printing device. If the ID information entered does not match the ID information stored, the system will perform the limitation on the user by not letting them perform the printing feature until the correct ID information is recognized by the printing device as being entered by the user. The user ID information can be entered in a network connected computer or the printing device itself. The combination of the feature of Maeda '703 of limiting the printing of the user that corresponds to an ID to access the apparatus and the sending of an ID from one apparatus to another combined with the features of Niitsuma '782, the above feature is performed; see col. 5, line 60 – col. 7, line 27, col. 12, lines 30-46 and see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to the features of external data output-limitation setting means for setting a limitation associated with image printing of image data and

causing said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said second image data reception means on the basis of a limitation set by said external data output limitation setting means in order to information to identify the sender of a print request and to determine whether the request is to be accepted (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

However, the combination of Niitsuma '782 and Maeda '703 fails to specifically teach a control means for determining whether or not the transfer source of said image data is the self image printing apparatus by confirming whether or not the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with an apparatus ID.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Saito '101. Saito '101 discloses a control means for determining whether or not the transfer source of said image data is the self image printing apparatus by confirming whether or not the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with an apparatus ID (i.e. **the system of Saito is similar to the Niitsuma reference in the manner in which a printing apparatus is able to communicate information to a server or computer (same field of endeavor)**. However, the facsimile device that is able to transmit data contains a memory device that is able to store message ID information regarding transferred information. This message ID contains the sender address, which can be the actual facsimile device, and other specific information. Once the system checks mail on the mail server and finds that the header of the mail on the sever matches the header of information on the 1st RAM (13) in the left mail ID storage part (33), the system determines that no new mail

has been sent to the server and the only information given to the server is the information that was sent from the facsimile device. By comparing the header of the mail on the server with the header of the mail on the facsimile device, the system determines, or confirms, that the transfer of mail is from the same source; see col. 3, ln 4 – col. 4, ln 67).

Therefore, in view of Saito '101, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of a control means for determining whether or not the transfer source of said image data is the self image printing apparatus by confirming whether or not the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with an apparatus ID, incorporated in the device of Niitsuma '782, as modified by the features of Maeda '703, in order to distinguish e-mail information that has been left by the facsimile apparatus (as stated in Saito '101 col. 1, ln 44-48).

Re claim 2: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 1, wherein said external data output limitation Setting means can set at least two kinds of settings including "always permitting output operation" and "always inhibiting output operation".

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein said external data output limitation setting means can set at least two

kinds of settings including "always permitting output operation" and "always inhibiting output operation" (i.e. in the system, the limitations set on the users of the printing apparatus can be set to "None", which corresponds to "always permitting output operation" and "Not permitted", which corresponds to "always inhibiting output operation". The combination of the feature of Maeda '703 of limiting the printing of the user that corresponds to an ID to access the apparatus combined with the features of Niitsuma '782, the above feature is performed; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein said external data output limitation Setting means can set at least two kinds of settings including "always permitting output operation" and "always inhibiting output operation" in order to information to identify the sender of a print request and to determine whether the request is to be accepted (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

Re claim 3: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 1, wherein said external data output limitation setting means comprises limit value setting means which can set at least "limit addition" and sets a limit value of the "limit addition", and said control means permits output operation until an output print count reaches the limit

value set by said limit value setting means, and inhibits output operation when the output print count reaches the limit value.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein said external data output limitation setting means comprises limit value setting means which can set at least "limit addition" and sets a limit value of the "limit addition" (**i.e. in the system, the "Job No" and the "Max jobs" options are able to set limits on the amount of jobs that can be printed. The "limit addition" can be considered as both options mentioned above; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52**), and

 said control means permits output operation until an output print count reaches the limit value set by said limit value setting means, and inhibits output operation when the output print count reaches the limit value (**i.e. in the system, when the print job count reaches a certain number set in the max jobs count or job number count, the user is notified of this fact and the user is not able to enter in request over this Max job limit. Since the user is not able to enter any more jobs over this max job limit, the system inhibits the output operation on the printing apparatus given from the client terminal. With the combination of the feature of Maeda '703, which will enable the system of Niitsuma '782 to communicate a notification to the user about a print job limit reaching the maximum, the above claim feature is performed; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67**).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein said external data output limitation setting means comprises limit value setting means which can set at least "limit addition" and sets a limit value of the "limit addition", and said control means permits output operation until an output print count reaches the limit value set by said limit value setting means, and inhibits output operation when the output print count reaches the limit value in order to set a number of print requests that can be active in a printing apparatus (col. 14, lines 6-45).

Re claim 4: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

Niitsuma '782 discloses a system according to claim 1, wherein

said first image data transmission means also transmits, to said information processing apparatus, also information of an operated output operation for image data transmitted by said first image data transmission means (i.e. **in the system, the first copier is able to output information regarding the operated output operation for image data to the personal computer operating as a server device. Since the digital copier contains a network device that transmits information regarding the image data and processing operation to be performed on the data; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]**),

said first image data reception means also receives the information from said first image data transmission means (i.e. the personal computer that performs processing on image data receives image data from the first digital copier; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

 said second image data transmission means also transmits the information received by said first image data reception means to the transfer destination address received by said first image data reception means (i.e. the personal computer that serves as a second data transmission means is used to transmit information to a destination such as the original transmitting point or to another image forming apparatus. The original apparatus that sent the image data information to the personal computer also sends the transfer destination of the image data to the personal computer, or server, which again can be the original transmitting point or another apparatus; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

 said second image data reception means receives the information from said second image data transmission means (i.e. the apparatus that receives the image data after processing at the personal computer, or image server, can be considered as the second image data reception means. The second image data reception means can be the original transmitting apparatus or a different copier in the system; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]) and

 control means for determining whether or not the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with an apparatus ID stored in said

apparatus ID storage means (i.e. in the system, a packet of information that is communicated over a network from a first apparatus can be checked by a second apparatus containing a CPU to determine if the packet or information belongs to the copier device itself. Since the packet information is in a form that contains the destination information in the actual packet, the system performs the feature of looking at an address in the transmitted packet and comparing this information with the copier's own address information. In order for the copier device to perform this feature, the copier has to contain a device that stores or is at least used to notify the system's CPU what the digital copier's address is on the network. As stated in paragraph [0051], an address of each digital copier is set. Once this address is set, it is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that this information has to be stored and readily available to the printer whenever it needs to include address information in transmitted data to the server in order to get the processed information returned; see paragraphs [0050]-[0058] and [0098]-[0110]) and

performs control to make said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said second image data reception means (i.e. in the system, after a server processes image data received from copier (1), the server can transfer the process information to copier (2) in order for this information to be printed. The digital copier to can receive this information and can be considered as the copier that is not the transfer source, or the server can also fit the above limitation. Whenever the latter copier receives the print job, the job can

be output based on the control command of outputting the image; see paragraphs [0048]-[0055] and [0099]-[0109].

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user, transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted, user information and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator (i.e. **in the system, with the use of the user name and password, the printer acquires this information in order to determine if the user is able to perform functions using the printing device. The printer uses the user name and password to validate the person as a user of the printing system, or performs the process of authentication of the user; see col. 7, lines 21-26 and col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52**) and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user (i.e. **in the system, the manager of the printing device is used to set the output limitation of each user that is authorized to use the printing device; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52**),

transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted (i.e. in the system of Maeda, the user name is considered as the user information that is output to the printing device. The user name information along with printing commands of an output operation of image data that is to be transmitted to the printer from a server device; see col. 7, lines 5-26),

and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means (i.e. when the ID information coincides with the ID information stored in the apparatus, the system performs the output limitation setup for the corresponding ID information; col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user, transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted, user information and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means in order to have information to identify the sender of a print request and to determine whether the request is to be accepted (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

Re claim 5: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

Niitsuma '782 discloses the feature of when the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with the apparatus ID stored in said apparatus ID storage means (**i.e. in the system of Niitsuma, the copier device is able to receive information over a network. The information communicated on the network is transmitted in a packet format. Within this packet format, the information contains not only the image data, but the destination of the image data. With a digital copier able to view such information communicated over the network, the copier device is able to check if the address, considered as the apparatus ID, in the packet information is for the copier device or not; see paragraphs [0050]-[0058] and [0090]-[0110].**).

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 4, wherein the control performed by said control means with respect to an output limitation when the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with the apparatus ID stored in said apparatus ID storage means is the same as control on an output limitation which is performed when an image based on image data is to be printed in said image printing apparatus without the mediacy of said information processing means.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein the control performed by said control means with respect to an output

limitation when the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with the apparatus ID stored in said apparatus ID storage means is the same as control that would be performed with the output limitation if an image based on image data is to be printed in said image printing apparatuses without the mediacy of said information processing means (**i.e. in the system of Maeda, the usage control of the image forming apparatus when using a computer to interact with a printing device is the same as the user simply using the copier device. In both methods, the control usage is based on specific permissions on the copier device setup by the manager for each user on the system; see col. 12, ln 30-46 and col. 13, ln 44-63.**).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of wherein the control performed by said control means with respect to an output limitation when the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with the apparatus ID stored in said apparatus ID storage means is the same as control on an output limitation which is performed when an image based on image data is to be printed in said image printing apparatus without the mediacy of said information processing means in order to have information to identify the sender of a print request and to determine whether the request is to be accepted (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

Re claim 6: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies a user who has operated output operation for the image data of corresponding information.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies a user who has operated output operation for the image data of corresponding information (**i.e. in the system, when the user reaches the maximum number of print requests to be taken by the printing apparatus, the printing apparatus then notifies the user that the maximum job number has been reached. The printing apparatus then receives no more requests for printing that may exceed the max number set for that particular user. Since the print request is rejected once the max job reaches the upper limit count, the image printing of that request is also rejected. With the combination of the feature of Maeda '703, which will enable the system of Niitsuma '782 to communicate a notification to the user, the above claim feature is performed; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67).**

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies a user who has operated output operation for the image data of corresponding information in order to notify the user of the maximum reached job count (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 16, lines 48-67).

Re claim 10: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 2, wherein said external data output limitation setting means comprises limit value setting means which can set at least "limit addition" and sets a limit value of the "limit addition", and said control means permits output operation until an output print count reaches the limit value set by said limit value setting means, and inhibits output operation when the output print count reaches the limit value.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein said external data output limitation setting means comprises limit value setting means which can set at least "limit addition" and sets a limit value of the "limit addition" (i.e. in the system, the "Job No" and the "Max jobs" options are able to set limits on the amount of jobs that can be printed. The "limit addition" can

be considered as both options mentioned above; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52), and

 said control means permits output operation until an output print count reaches the limit value set by said limit value setting means, and inhibits output operation when the output print count reaches the limit value (**i.e. in the system, when the print job count reaches a certain number set in the max jobs count or job number count, the user is notified of this fact and the user is not able to enter in request over this Max job limit. Since the user is not able to enter any more jobs over this max job limit, the system inhibits the output operation on the printing apparatus given from the client terminal. With the combination of the feature of Maeda '703, which will enable the system of Niitsuma '782 to communicate a notification to the user about a print job limit reaching the maximum, the above claim feature is performed; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67).**

 Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein said external data output limitation setting means comprises limit value setting means which can set at least "limit addition" and sets a limit value of the "limit addition", and said control means permits output operation until an output print count reaches the limit value set by said limit value setting means, and inhibits output operation when the output print count reaches the limit value in order to set a number of print requests that can be active in a printing apparatus (col. 14, lines 6-45).

Re claim 11: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

Niitsuma '782 discloses a system according to claim 2, wherein

 said first image data transmission means also transmits, to said information processing apparatus, information of an operated output operation for image data transmitted by said first image data transmission means (**i.e. in the system, the first copier is able to output information regarding the operated output operation for image data to the personal computer operating as a server device. Since the digital copier contains a network device that transmits information regarding the image data and processing operation to be performed on the data; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),**

 said first image data reception means also receives the information from said first image data transmission means (**i.e. the personal computer that performs processing on image data receives image data from the first digital copier; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),**

 said second image data transmission means also transmits the information received by said first image data reception means to the transfer destination address received by said first image data reception means (**i.e. the personal computer that serves as a second data transmission means is used to transmit information to a destination such as the original transmitting point or to another image forming**

apparatus. The original apparatus that sent the image data information to the personal computer also sends the transfer destination of the image data to the personal computer, or server, which again can be the original transmitting point or another apparatus; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

 said second image data reception means receives the information from said second image data transmission means (i.e. the apparatus that receives the image data after processing at the personal computer, or image server, can be considered as the second image data reception means. The second image data reception means can be the original transmitting apparatus or a different copier in the system; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]) and

 control means for determining whether or not the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with an apparatus ID stored in said apparatus ID storage means (i.e. in the system, a packet of information that is communicated over a network from a first apparatus can be checked by a second apparatus containing a CPU to determine if the packet or information belongs to the copier device itself. Since the packet information is in a form that contains the destination information in the actual packet, the system performs the feature of looking at an address in the transmitted packet and comparing this information with the copier's own address information. In order for the copier device to perform this feature, the copier has to contain a device that stores or is at least used to notify the system's CPU what the digital copier's address is on the network. As stated in paragraph [0051], an address of each digital copier is set.

Once this address is set, it is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that this information has to be stored and readily available to the printer whenever it needs to include address information in transmitted data to the server in order to get the processed information returned; see paragraphs [0050]-[0058] and [0098]-[0110]) and

performs control to make said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said second image data reception means (i.e. in the system, after a server processes image data received from copier (1), the server can transfer the process information to copier (2) in order for this information to be printed. The digital copier to can receive this information and can be considered as the copier that is not the transfer source, or the server can also fit the above limitation. Whenever the latter copier receives the print job, the job can be output based on the control command of outputting the image; see paragraphs [0048]-[0055] and [0099]-[0109]).

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user, transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted, user information and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator (i.e. in the system, with the use of the user name and password, the printer acquires this information in order to determine if the user is able to perform functions using the printing device. The printer uses the user name and password to validate the person as a user of the printing system, or performs the process of authentication of the user; see col. 7, lines 21-26 and col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52) and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user (i.e. in the system, the manager of the printing device is used to set the output limitation of each user that is authorized to use the printing device; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52),

transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted (i.e. in the system of Maeda, the user name is considered as the user information that is output to the printing device. The user name information along with printing commands of an output operation of image data that is to be transmitted to the printer from a server device; see col. 7, lines 5-26),

and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means (i.e. when the ID information coincides with the ID information stored in the apparatus, the system performs the output limitation setup for the corresponding ID information; col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user, transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted, user information and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means in order to have information to identify the sender of a print request and to determine whether the request is to be accepted (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

Re claim 12: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

Niitsuma '782 discloses a system according to claim 3, wherein

 said first image data transmission means also transmits, to said information processing apparatus, information of an operated output operation for image data transmitted by said first image data transmission means (**i.e. in the system, the first copier is able to output information regarding the operated output operation for image data to the personal computer operating as a server device. Since the digital copier contains a network device that transmits information regarding the**

image data and processing operation to be performed on the data; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

 said first image data reception means also receives the information from said first image data transmission means (i.e. the personal computer that performs processing on image data receives image data from the first digital copier; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

 said second image data transmission means also transmits the information received by said first image data reception means to the transfer destination address received by said first image data reception means (i.e. the personal computer that serves as a second data transmission means is used to transmit information to a destination such as the original transmitting point or to another image forming apparatus. The original apparatus that sent the image data information to the personal computer also sends the transfer destination of the image data to the personal computer, or server, which again can be the original transmitting point or another apparatus; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

 said second image data reception means receives the information from said second image data transmission means (i.e. the apparatus that receives the image data after processing at the personal computer, or image server, can be considered as the second image data reception means. The second image data reception means can be the original transmitting apparatus or a different copier in the system; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]) and

control means for determining whether or not the apparatus ID received by said second image data reception means coincides with an apparatus ID stored in said apparatus ID storage means (i.e. in the system, a packet of information that is communicated over a network from a first apparatus can be checked by a second apparatus containing a CPU to determine if the packet or information belongs to the copier device itself. Since the packet information is in a form that contains the destination information in the actual packet, the system performs the feature of looking at an address in the transmitted packet and comparing this information with the copier's own address information. In order for the copier device to perform this feature, the copier has to contain a device that stores or is at least used to notify the system's CPU what the digital copier's address is on the network. As stated in paragraph [0051], an address of each digital copier is set. Once this address is set, it is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that this information has to be stored and readily available to the printer whenever it needs to include address information in transmitted data to the server in order to get the processed information returned; see paragraphs [0050]-[0058] and [0098]-[0110]) and

performs control to make said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said second image data reception means (i.e. in the system, after a server processes image data received from copier (1), the server can transfer the process information to copier (2) in order for this information to be printed. The digital copier to can receive this information and can be

considered as the copier that is not the transfer source, or the server can also fit the above limitation. Whenever the latter copier receives the print job, the job can be output based on the control command of outputting the image; see paragraphs [0048]-[0055] and [0099]-[0109].

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user, transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted, user information and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator (i.e. in the system, with the use of the user name and password, the printer acquires this information in order to determine if the user is able to perform functions using the printing device. The printer uses the user name and password to validate the person as a user of the printing system, or performs the process of authentication of the user; see col. 7, lines 21-26 and col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52) and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user (i.e. in the system, the manager of the printing device is used to set the output limitation of

each user that is authorized to use the printing device; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52),

transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted (i.e. in the system of Maeda, the user name is considered as the user information that is output to the printing device. The user name information along with printing commands of an output operation of image data that is to be transmitted to the printer from a server device; see col. 7, lines 5-26),

and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means (i.e. when the ID information coincides with the ID information stored in the apparatus, the system performs the output limitation setup for the corresponding ID information; col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein at least one of said image printing apparatuses further comprises user authentication means for authenticating a user as an operator and user-specific output limitation setting means for setting an output limitation for each user, transmits user information of a user who has operated output operation for image data transmitted, user information and when the apparatus IDs coincide with each other, performs control on the basis of the limitation set by said user-specific output limitation setting means in order to have

information to identify the sender of a print request and to determine whether the request is to be accepted (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

Re claim 17: Niitsuma '782 discloses an image printing apparatus which has an image printing section for printing an image on a sheet on the basis of the image data (i.e. in the system, a image forming means is used to form or print an image on a sheet that reflects the image data that is processed; see fig. 2; paragraphs [0029]-[0031], [0049] and [0055]), and first image processing section for performing image processing for the image data (i.e. the image forming apparatus contains an image processing means that is used to conduct the image processing on the image data read from the image reading means; see paragraphs [0028]-[0031]), and formed by connecting, through a network (i.e. as seen in figure 1, a plurality of image printing apparatuses (1 and 2) are connected through a network (4). There may be a large number of image forming apparatuses compared to a large number of personal computers (3) that serve as image processing servers (3); see figs. 1 and 3; paragraphs [0047]-[0062]), to an information processing apparatus having second image processing means for performing image processing for the image data (i.e. the image processing apparatus, considered as the information processing apparatus, contains a image processing means that performs image processing on image data transferred from the image forming apparatus; see paragraphs [0028]-[0031]),

wherein said image printing apparatus further comprises storage section for storing an apparatus ID which specifies said image printing apparatus itself (i.e. the address of the image forming apparatus is considered as the apparatus ID. In each of the apparatuses, the address on the network is previously set, so that the image forming apparatus can be discriminated on the network from other apparatuses. In order for the image forming apparatus to memorize this address, the address has to be stored on the image forming device in order to send this to other devices on the network; see paragraph [0051], [0058]),

a data transmission section for transmitting, to said information processing apparatus, image data to be output, an apparatus ID stored in said storage section, and a transfer destination address which is an address of a remote image printing apparatus to which the image data is to be transferred (i.e. the network connecting means (11) is used to transmit information to the image processing apparatus that is used to perform image processing on the transferred image data. The transferred data includes the image data and the actual apparatus ID that represents the address of the transmitting apparatus. Also, in the system, the transmitting apparatus can send information from the image processing apparatus to a different image forming apparatus as stated in paragraph [0050]. With this feature of Niitsuma '782, the destination address information has to be sent to the personal computer or server in order to know what different location to send the processed image data; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

image printing of image data which is transferred from an apparatus as a transfer source other than the image printing apparatus itself (i.e. the system allows for the image data that is processed to be sent to the same or another image forming apparatus besides the image forming apparatus that sent the image data information to be processed. The processed information can be printed after the image forming apparatuses receive the image data; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067]),

a data reception section for receiving image data and an apparatus ID from said information processing apparatus (i.e. the first digital copying device that transmits information to the server contains the second image data reception means since it receives the image data from the server after image processing is performed on the server. Also, since the image data be contained within packet information and this packet information can also have the destination of the image data, which can include the address of a copier considered as an apparatus ID, then the original digital copying device can receive both image data and packet information that contains information designating if the packet of information is for the digital copier itself; see paragraphs [0049]-[0067] and [0099]), and

a control section for determining whether or not the apparatus ID received by said data reception section coincides with an apparatus ID which specifies the image printing apparatus itself stored in said storage section (i.e. in the system, a packet of information that is communicated over a network from a first apparatus can be checked by a second apparatus containing a CPU to determine if the packet or

information belongs to the copier device itself. Since the packet information is in a form that contains the destination information in the actual packet, the system performs the feature of looking at an address in the transmitted packet and comparing this information with the copier's own address information. In order for the copier device to perform this feature, the copier has to contain a device that stores or is at least used to notify the system's CPU what the digital copier's address is on the network. As stated in paragraph [0051], an address of each digital copier is set. Once this address is set, it is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that this information has to be stored and readily available to the printer whenever it needs to include address information in transmitted data to the server in order to get the processed information returned; see paragraphs [0050]-[0058] and [0098]-[0110]) and

when said transfer source of said image data is not the image printing apparatus itself, causing said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said data reception section (i.e. in the system, after a server processes image data received from copier (1), the server can transfer the process information to copier (2) in order for this information to be printed. The digital copier to can receive this information and can be considered as the copier that is not the transfer source, or the server can also fit the above limitation. Whenever the latter copier receives the print job, the job can be output based on the control command of outputting the image; see paragraphs [0048]-[0055] and [0099]-[0109]).

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a setting section for setting a limitation associated with image printing of image data, and a control section for determining whether or not the transfer source of said image data is the image printing apparatus itself by confirming whether or not the apparatus ID received by said data reception section coincides with an apparatus ID, causing said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said data reception section on the basis of a limitation set by said setting section.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses a setting section for setting a limitation associated with image printing of image data (**i.e. the system of Maeda is similar to the system of Nitsuma since they both involve transferring information between a server or computer and printer for printing information (same field of endeavor)**). However, in the system of Maeda, the printer has profiles regarding the users that limit the use of the printing apparatus. **The manager of the apparatus not only sets the limitations but can also set the users' passwords to the image forming apparatus; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52**), and causing said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said data reception section on the basis of a limitation set by said setting section (**i.e. in the system, when a user enters in ID information in order to use the apparatus, the image forming apparatus compares this ID information to the ID information stored in the printing device. If the ID information entered does not match the ID information stored, the system will perform the limitation on the user by not letting them perform the printing feature**

until the correct ID information is recognized by the printing device as being entered by the user. The user ID information can be entered in a network connected computer or the printing device itself. The combination of the feature of Maeda '703 of limiting the printing of the user that corresponds to an ID to access the apparatus and the sending of an ID from one apparatus to another combined with the features of Niitsuma '782, the above feature is performed; see col. 5, line 60 – col. 7, line 27, col. 12, lines 30-46 and see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to the features of a setting section for setting a limitation associated with image printing of image data, and causing said image printing means to print an image based on the image data received by said data reception section on the basis of a limitation set by said setting section in order to information to identify the sender of a print request and to determine whether the request is to be accepted (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

However, the combination of Niitsuma '782 and Maeda '703 fails to specifically teach a control section for determining whether or not the transfer source of said image data is the image printing apparatus itself by confirming whether or not the apparatus ID received by said data reception section coincides with an apparatus ID.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Saito '101. Saito '101 discloses a control section for determining whether or not the transfer source of said

image data is the image printing apparatus itself by confirming whether or not the apparatus ID received by said data reception section coincides with an apparatus ID (i.e. the system of Saito is similar to the Niitsuma reference in the manner in which a printing apparatus is able to communicate information to a server or computer (same field of endeavor). However, the facsimile device that is able to transmit data contains a memory device that is able to store message ID information regarding transferred information. This message ID contains the sender address, which can be the actual facsimile device, and other specific information. Once the system checks mail on the mail server and finds that the header of the mail on the sever matches the header of information on the 1st RAM (13) in the left mail ID storage part (33), the system determines that no new mail has been sent to the server and the only information given to the server is the information that was sent from the facsimile device. By comparing the header of the mail on the server with the header of the mail on the facsimile device, the system determines, or confirms, that the transfer of mail is from the same source; see col. 3, ln 4 – col. 4, ln 67).

Therefore, in view of Saito '101, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of a control section for determining whether or not the transfer source of said image data is the image printing apparatus itself by confirming whether or not the apparatus ID received by said data reception section coincides with an apparatus ID, incorporated in the device of Niitsuma '782, as modified by the features of Maeda '703, in order to distinguish e-mail

information that has been left by the facsimile apparatus (as stated in Saito '101 col. 1, ln 44-48).

Re claim 18: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 17, wherein said setting section can set at least a setting "always inhibiting output operation".

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein said setting section can set at least a setting "always inhibiting output operation" (**i.e. in the system, the limitations set on the users of the printing apparatus can be set to "None", which corresponds to "always permitting output operation" and "Not permitted", which corresponds to "always inhibiting output operation". The combination of the feature of Maeda '703 of limiting the printing of the user that corresponds to an ID to access the apparatus combined with the features of Niitsuma '782, the above feature is performed; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52.**).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein said setting section can set at least a setting "always inhibiting output operation" in order to information to identify the sender of a print request and to determine whether the request is to be accepted (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

Re claim 19: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 17, wherein said setting section can set an upper limit value of output print count of image printing, and said control section inhibits image printing based on said received image data when the output print count of image printing based on said received image data reaches the upper limit value.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein said setting section can set an upper limit value of output print count of image printing (**i.e. in the system, the “Job No” and the “Max jobs” options are able to set limits on the amount of jobs that can be printed. The “limit addition” can be considered as both options mentioned above and can be analogous to the upper limit value set for image printing; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52**), and

 said control section inhibits image printing based on said received image data when the output print count of image printing based on said received image data reaches the upper limit value (**i.e. in the system, when the print job count reaches a certain number set in the max jobs count or job number count, the user is notified of this fact and the user is not able to enter in request over this Max job limit, or upper limit value. Since the user is not able to enter any more jobs over this max job limit, the system inhibits the output operation on the printing apparatus given**

from the client terminal. With the combination of the feature of Maeda '703, which will enable the system of Niitsuma '782 to communicate a notification to the user about a print job limit reaching the maximum, the above claim feature is performed; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of wherein said setting section can set an upper limit value of output print count of image printing, and said control section inhibits image printing based on said received image data when the output print count of image printing based on said received image data reaches the upper limit value in order to set a number of print requests that can be active in a printing apparatus (col. 14, lines 6-45).

Re claim 7: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to any one of claims 1 to 17, wherein, when said control section rejects image printing based on the image data, said control section notifies at least one of a user who has operated output operation for the image data, an administrator, and an image printing apparatus as a transfer source of the image data, of corresponding information.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein, when said control section rejects image printing based on the image

data, said control section notifies at least one of a user who has operated output operation for the image data, an administrator, and an image printing apparatus as a transfer source of the image data, of corresponding information (i.e. **in the system, when the user reaches the maximum number of print requests to be taken by the printing apparatus, the printing apparatus then notifies the user, which is using the system for an output operation, that the maximum job number has been reached. The printing apparatus then receives no more requests for printing that may exceed the max number set for that particular user. Since the print request is rejected once the max job reaches the upper limit count, the image printing of that request is also rejected; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67).**

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of wherein, when said control section rejects image printing based on the image data, said control section notifies at least one of a user who has operated output operation for the image data, an administrator, and an image printing apparatus as a transfer source of the image data, of corresponding information in order to notify the user of the maximum reached job count (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 16, lines 48-67).

5. Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Niitsuma '782, as modified by Maeda '703 and Saito '101, as applied to claim 6 above, and further in view of Sese '864 (US Pub No 2002/0171864).

Re claim 7: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies an administrator of corresponding information.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies of corresponding information (**i.e. in the system, when the user reaches the maximum number of print requests to be taken by the printing apparatus, the printing apparatus then notifies the user that the maximum job number has been reached. The printing apparatus then receives no more requests for printing that may exceed the max number set for that particular user. Since the print request is rejected once the max job reaches the upper limit count, the image printing of that request is also rejected; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67).**

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies of corresponding information in order to notify the user of the maximum reached job count (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 16, lines 48-67).

However, the combination of Niitsuma '782, Maeda '703 and Saito '101 fails to teach an administrator.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Sese '864. Sese '864 discloses an administrator (i.e. **in the system of Sese '864, the administrator is notified when printing is inhibited in the system. The use of the Sese '864 reference is to disclose an administrator receiving the notification; see paragraph [0050].**

Therefore, in view of Sese '864, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of an administrator in order to notify an administrator when a print job is inhibited from being printed (as stated in Sese '864 paragraph [0050]).

Re claim 8: The teachings of Niitsuma '782, modified by Maeda '703 and Saito '101, and further in view of Sese '864 are disclosed above.

Niitsuma '782 discloses a system according to claim 6 or 7, wherein said control means performs by e-mail (i.e. in the system of Niitsuma '782, the communication of the devices can be performed using the ftp protocol or e-mail; see paragraph [0063]).

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach performs the notification.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses performs the notification (i.e. in the system, when the user reaches the maximum number of print requests to be taken by the printing apparatus, the printing apparatus then notifies the user that the maximum job number has been reached. The printing apparatus then receives no more requests for printing that may exceed the max number set for that particular user. Since the print request is rejected once the max job reaches the upper limit count, the image printing of that request is also rejected. The communication between the devices occur using ftp protocol or the http protocol. With the combination of the feature of Maeda '703, which will enable the system of Niitsuma '782 to communicate a notification to the user, the above claim feature is performed; see col. 6, lines 15-55, col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature performs the notification in order to notify the user of the maximum reached job count (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 16, lines 48-67).

Re claim 13: The teachings of Niitsuma '782 in view of Maeda '703 and Saito '101 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 6, wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies an administrator of corresponding information.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies of corresponding information (i.e. **in the system, when the user reaches the maximum number of print requests to be taken by the printing apparatus, the printing apparatus then notifies the user that the maximum job number has been reached. The printing apparatus then receives no more requests for printing that may exceed the max number set for that particular user. Since the print request is rejected once the max job reaches the upper limit count, the image printing of that request is also rejected; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67).**

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies of corresponding information in order

to notify the user of the maximum reached job count (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 16, lines 48-67).

However, the combination of Niitsuma '782, Maeda '703 and Saito '101 fails to teach an administrator.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Sese '864. Sese '864 discloses an administrator (i.e. in the system of Sese '864, the administrator is notified when printing is inhibited in the system. The use of the Sese '864 reference is to disclose an administrator receiving the notification; see paragraph [0050]).

Therefore, in view of Sese '864, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of an administrator in order to notify an administrator when a print job is inhibited from being printed (as stated in Sese '864 paragraph [0050]).

Re claim 14: The teachings of Niitsuma '782, modified by Maeda '703 and Saito '101, and further in view of Sese '864 are disclosed above.

Niitsuma '782 discloses a system according to claim 7, wherein said control means performs by e-mail (i.e. in the system of Niitsuma '782, the communication of the devices can be performed using the ftp protocol or e-mail; see paragraph [0063]).

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach performs the notification.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses performs the notification (i.e. in the system, when the user reaches the maximum number of print requests to be taken by the printing apparatus, the printing apparatus then notifies the user that the maximum job number has been reached. The printing apparatus then receives no more requests for printing that may exceed the max number set for that particular user. Since the print request is rejected once the max job reaches the upper limit count, the image printing of that request is also rejected. The communication between the devices occur using ftp protocol or the http protocol. With the combination of the feature of Maeda '703, which will enable the system of Niitsuma '782 to communicate a notification to the user, the above claim feature is performed; see col. 6, lines 15-55, col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature performs the notification in order to notify the user of the maximum reached job count (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 16, lines 48-67).

6. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Niitsuma '782, as modified by Maeda '703, Saito '101 and Sese '864, as applied to claim 8 above, and further in view of Kuroda '020 (USP 6804020).

Re claim 9: The teachings of Niitsuma '782, modified by Maeda '703 and Saito '101, and further in view of Seseck '864 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means (**i.e. in the system, when the profile of a user on a printer is “Not Permitted” or there print requests equal the “Max jobs” number, the printer does not allow for anymore print request to be received by the respective user and therefore, does not print any images from the user thereafter. This performs the feature of rejecting printing that is received from a transmission device requesting the printing; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67.**).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image

data reception means in order to have information to determine whether the request is to be accepted for printing (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

However, the combination of Niitsuma '782, Maeda '703, Saito '101 and Sesek '864 fails to teach said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Kuroda '020. Kuroda '020 discloses said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information (i.e. in Kuroda '020, the **copying machines are able to send information to other copying machines considered as cooperating devices. These cooperating devices are able to output information that was originally formed at another copier. However, there are times when the cooperating device can not be used for processing and the image data that is desired to be printed by the cooperating device is prevented, or rejected, from being printed. Once this situation occurs, the cooperating device notifies the transmitting copier that there is trouble in the device that is preventing the image data from being processed or printed on the cooperating device; see col. 10, line 53 – col. 12, line 19**), and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification (i.e. the image forming apparatus that is trying to conduct cooperation processing is the apparatus that is notified on its display device (221) on the

operation panel showing the current trouble the cooperating apparatus is having to process, or print, image data sent from the transmitting apparatus. With the combination of the features of Maeda and Kuroda with the features of *1, the above feature of the claim is performed; see col. 10, line 53 – col. 12, line 19).

Therefore, in view of Kuroda '020, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification in order to have a display section on the transmitting apparatus to display the cause of trouble for the cooperation for printing or processing image data (as stated in Kuroda '020 col. 12, lines 6-19).

Re claim 15: The teachings of Niitsuma '782, modified by Maeda '703 and Saito '101, and further in view of Sesek '864 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 7, wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means (**i.e. in the system, when the profile of a user on a printer is “Not Permitted” or there print requests equal the “Max jobs” number, the printer does not allow for anymore print request to be received by the respective user and therefore, does not print any images from the user thereafter. This performs the feature of rejecting printing that is received from a transmission device requesting the printing; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67.**).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means in order to have information to determine whether the request is to be accepted for printing (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

However, the combination of Niitsuma '782, Maeda '703, Saito '101 and Sese '864 fails to teach said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Kuroda '020. Kuroda '020 discloses said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information (**i.e. in Kuroda '020, the**

copying machines are able to send information to other copying machines considered as cooperating devices. These cooperating devices are able to output information that was originally formed at another copier. However, there are times when the cooperating device can not be used for processing and the image data that is desired to be printed by the cooperating device is prevented, or rejected, from being printed. Once this situation occurs, the cooperating device notifies the transmitting copier that there is trouble in the device that is preventing the image data from being processed or printed on the cooperating device; see col. 10, line 53 – col. 12, line 19), and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification (i.e. the image forming apparatus that is trying to conduct cooperation processing is the apparatus that is notified on its display device (221) on the operation panel showing the current trouble the cooperating apparatus is having to process, or print, image data sent from the transmitting apparatus. With the combination of the features of Maeda and Kuroda with the features of *1, the above feature of the claim is performed; see col. 10, line 53 – col. 12, line 19).

Therefore, in view of Kuroda '020, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification in order to have a display section on the transmitting apparatus to display the cause of trouble for the

cooperation for printing or processing image data (as stated in Kuroda '020 col. 12, lines 6-19).

Re claim 16: The teachings of Niitsuma '782, modified by Maeda '703 and Saito '101, and further in view of Sesek '864 are disclosed above.

However, Niitsuma '782 fails to teach a system according to claim 8, wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means, said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Maeda '703. Maeda '703 discloses wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means (**i.e. in the system, when the profile of a user on a printer is “Not Permitted” or there print requests equal the “Max jobs” number, the printer does not allow for anymore print request to be received by the respective user and therefore, does not print any images from the user thereafter. This performs the feature of rejecting printing that is received from a transmission device requesting the printing; see col. 13, line 47 – col. 14, line 52 and col. 16, lines 28-67**).

Therefore, in view of Maeda '703, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of wherein when said control means rejects image printing based on the image data received by said second image data reception means in order to have information to determine whether the request is to be accepted for printing (as stated in Maeda '703 col. 7, lines 21-26).

However, the combination of Niitsuma '782, Maeda '703, Saito '101 and Sesek '864 fails to teach said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Kuroda '020. Kuroda '020 discloses said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information (**i.e. in Kuroda '020, the copying machines are able to send information to other copying machines considered as cooperating devices. These cooperating devices are able to output information that was originally formed at another copier. However, there are times when the cooperating device can not be used for processing and the image data that is desired to be printed by the cooperating device is prevented, or rejected, from being printed. Once this situation occurs, the cooperating device notifies the transmitting copier that there is trouble in the device that is preventing the image data from being processed or printed on the cooperating device; see col. 10, line 53 – col. 12, line 19**), and said image printing apparatus

further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification (i.e. the image forming apparatus that is trying to conduct cooperation processing is the apparatus that is notified on its display device (221) on the operation panel showing the current trouble the cooperating apparatus is having to process, or print, image data sent from the transmitting apparatus. With the combination of the features of Maeda and Kuroda with the features of *1, the above feature of the claim is performed; see col. 10, line 53 – col. 12, line 19).

Therefore, in view of Kuroda '020, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the features of said control means notifies an image printing apparatus as a transmission source of the image data of corresponding information, and said image printing apparatus further comprises display means for displaying information indicating reception of the notification in order to have a display section on the transmitting apparatus to display the cause of trouble for the cooperation for printing or processing image data (as stated in Kuroda '020 col. 12, lines 6-19).

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

8. Niituma '860 (US pub no 2002/0109860) discloses a system with digital copiers using servers as image processors and sending this information back to the transmitting point.

9. Yoshiura '693 (USP 5854693) discloses a copier that sends information to another apparatus to be processed and this information is sent back to the original copying device for printing.

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CHAD DICKERSON whose telephone number is (571)270-1351. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. thru Thur. 9:00-6:30 Fri. 9:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Twyler Haskins can be reached on (571)-272-7406. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/C. D./
/Chad Dickerson/
Examiner, Art Unit 2625

/Twyler L. Haskins/
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